As a result, businesses are expected to increasingly use railroads to carry their goods.

However, growth in the number of railroad transportation workers will generally be adversely affected by innovations such as larger, faster, more fuel-efficient trains and computerized classification yards that make it possible to move freight more economically. Computers are used to keep track of freight cars, match empty cars with the closest loads, and dispatch trains. Computer-assisted devices alert engineers to train malfunctions and new work rules have become widespread allowing trains to operate with two- or three-person crews instead of the traditional five-person crews. Employment of locomotive and yard engineers should grow as the industry expands to high-speed service in various corridors in the country.

Subway and streetcar operator employment is expected to grow as metropolitan areas build new rail systems and add new lines to existing systems. State and local governments support new construction because population growth in metropolitan areas has increased automobile traffic, making streets and highways more congested. Improved rail systems offer an alternative to automobile transportation that can reduce road congestion and, by reducing automobile use, contribute to government mandated improvements in air quality.

Earnings

Median hourly earnings of locomotive engineers were $19.14 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $15.07 and $23.81 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $12.22 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $35.65 an hour.

Median hourly earnings of railroad conductors and yardmasters were $18.51 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $16.24 and $23.47 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $13.60 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $35.27 an hour.

Median hourly earnings of railroad brake, signal, and switch operators were $17.57 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $15.50 and $19.44 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $12.86 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $24.16 an hour.

Median hourly earnings of subway and streetcar operators were $20.83 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $19.04 and $22.60 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $16.23 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $23.66 an hour.

Most railroad workers in road service are paid according to miles traveled or hours worked; whichever leads to higher earnings. Full-time employees have steadier work, more regular hours, increased opportunities for overtime work, and higher earnings than do those assigned to the extra board. In 1998, a third of all rail transportation employees worked 40 hours a week. About another third worked in excess of 40-hours and received extra pay for overtime.

According to the National Railroad Labor Conference in 1997, the average annual earnings for engineers ranged from $55,100 for yard-freight engineers, to $69,000 for local-freight engineers. For conductors, earnings ranged from $51,700 for yard-freight conductors, up to $65,200 for passenger conductors. The NRLC reported that brake operators averaged from $42,400 for yard-freight operators, up to $57,700 for local-freight operators.

According to data from the American Public Transit Association, in early 1999 the top-rate full-time hourly earnings of operators for commuter rail ranged from $17.50 to $28.70; operators for heavy rail from $17.50 to $26.00; and operators for light rail from $13.60 to $21.90. Transit workers in the northeastern United States typically had the highest wages.

More than 80 percent of railroad transportation workers are members of unions. Many different railroad unions represent various crafts on the railroads. Most railroad engineers are members of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, while most other railroad transportation workers are members of the United Transportation Union. Many subway operators are members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, while others belong to the Transport Workers Union of North America.

Sources of Additional Information

To obtain information on employment opportunities for railroad transportation workers, contact the employment offices of the various railroads and rail transit systems, or State employment service offices.

For general information about the rail transportation industry, contact:

☛ Association of American Railroads, 50 F St. NW., Washington, DC 20001. Internet: **http://www.aar.org**.

☛ Federal Railroad Administration, 400 7th St. SW., Washington, DC 20590. Internet: **http://www.fra.dot.gov**

For general information about career opportunities in passenger transportation, contact:

☛ American Public Transit Association, 1201 New York Ave. NW., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005. Internet: **http://www.apta.com**

General information on rail transportation occupations and career opportunities as a locomotive engineer is available from:

☛ Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, 1370 Ontario Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113-1702. Internet: **http://www.ble.org**

For information on certification and training programs, contact:

☛ National Association of Railroad Sciences, Johnson County Community College, 12345 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS 66210. Internet: **http://www.jccc.net/orgs/nars**

Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs

(O*NET 97114)

Significant Points

- Taxi drivers and chauffeurs can work all schedules, including full-time, part-time, night, evening, and weekend work.
- Many people work in these jobs for short periods, so job opportunities will be good because replacement needs are high.
- Many taxi drivers and chauffeurs like the independent, unsupervised work of driving their automobile.

Nature of the Work

Anyone who has been in a large city knows the importance of taxi and limousine drivers. These drivers help passengers get to and from their homes, workplaces, and recreational pursuits such as dining, entertainment, and shopping. They also help out-of-town business people and tourists get around in new surroundings.

Taxi drivers, also known as cab drivers, usually spend most of their time cruising the streets to pick up fares. They drive taxicabs, which are most frequently large, conventional automobiles modified for commercial passenger transport.

At the start of their driving shift, taxi drivers usually report to a taxicab service or garage where they are assigned a vehicle. They record their name, work date, and cab identification number on a trip sheet. Drivers check the cab's fuel and oil levels, and make sure the lights, brakes, and windshield wipers are in good working order. Drivers adjust rear and side mirrors and their seat for comfort. Any equipment or part not in good working order is reported to the dispatcher or company mechanic.

Taxi drivers pick up passengers in one of three ways: cruising the streets to pick up random passengers; prearranged pickups; and pickups from taxi stands established in highly trafficked areas. The majority of passengers hail or "wave down" drivers cruising the streets, especially in urban areas. Customers may also prearrange a

pickup by calling a cab company and giving a location, approximate pick up time, and destination. The cab company dispatcher then relays the information to a driver by two-way radio, cellular telephone, or on-board computer. Drivers also pick up passengers waiting at cabstands or in taxi lines at airports, train stations, hotels, and other places where people frequently seek taxis.

Some drivers transport individuals with special needs, such as those with disabilities and the elderly. They operate specially equipped vehicles designed to accommodate a variety of needs in non-emergency situations. Although special certification is not necessary, some additional training on the equipment and passenger needs may be required.

Drivers should be familiar with streets in the areas they serve so they can use the most efficient route to destinations. They should know the locations of frequently requested destinations, such as airports, bus and railroad terminals, convention centers, hotels, and other points of interest. In case of emergency, the driver should also know the location of fire and police stations and hospitals.

Upon reaching the destination, drivers determine the fare and announce it to the rider. Fares often consist of many parts. In many taxicabs, a taximeter measures the fare based on the length of the trip and the amount of time the trip took. Drivers turn the taximeter on when passengers enter the cab and turn it off when they reach the final destination. The fare may also include a surcharge for additional passengers, a fee for handling luggage, or a drop charge—an additional flat fee added for the use the cab. Passengers generally add a tip or gratuity to the fare. The amount of the gratuity depends on the passengers' satisfaction with the quality and efficiency of the ride and courtesy of the driver. Drivers issue receipts upon request from the passenger. They enter onto the trip sheet all information regarding the trip, including the place and time of pick-up and drop-off and the total fee. These logs help check the driver's activity and efficiency. Drivers also must fill out accident reports when necessary.

Chauffeurs operate limousines, vans, and private cars for limousine companies, private businesses, government agencies, and wealthy individuals. Many chauffeurs transport customers in large vans between hotels and airports, bus, or train terminals. Others drive luxury automobiles, such as limousines, to business events, entertainment venues, and social events. Still others provide full time personal transportation for wealthy families and private companies.

At the start of the workday, chauffeurs ready their automobiles or vans for use. They inspect the vehicle for cleanliness and, when needed, vacuum the interior and wash the exterior body, windows, and mirrors. They check fuel and oil levels and make sure the lights, tires, brakes, and windshield wipers work. Chauffeurs may perform routine maintenance and make minor repairs, such as changing tires or adding oil and other fluids when needed. If a vehicle requires more complicated repair, they take it to a professional mechanic.

Taxi drivers should be familiar with frequently requested destinations in the areas they serve.

Chauffeurs cater to passengers with attentive customer service and a special regard for detail. They help riders into the car by holding open doors, holding umbrellas when raining, and loading packages and luggage into the trunk of the car. They may perform errands for their employers such as delivering packages or picking up clients arriving at airports. Many chauffeurs offer conveniences and luxuries in their limousines to insure a pleasurable ride, such as newspapers, magazines, music, drinks, televisions, and telephones. A growing number of chauffeurs work as full-service executive assistants, simultaneously acting as driver, secretary, and itinerary-planner.

Working Conditions

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs occasionally have to load and unload heavy luggage and packages. Driving for long periods can be tiring and uncomfortable, especially in densely populated urban areas. Drivers must be alert to conditions on the road, especially in heavy and congested traffic or in bad weather. They must take precautions to prevent accidents and avoid sudden stops, turns, and other driving maneuvers that would jar passengers. Taxi drivers also risk robbery because they work alone and often carry large amounts of cash.

Work hours of taxi drivers and chauffeurs vary greatly. Some jobs offer full-time or part-time employment with work hours that can change from day to day or remain the same every day. It is often necessary for drivers to report to work on short notice. Chauffeurs who work for a single employer may be on call much of the time. Evening and weekend work are common for limousine and taxicab services.

The needs of the client or employer dictate the work schedule for chauffeurs. The work of taxi drivers is much less structured. Working free from supervision, they may break for a meal or a rest whenever their vehicle is unoccupied. This occupation is attractive to individuals seeking flexible work schedules, such as college and post-graduate students. Similarly, other service workers such as ambulance drivers and police officers often consider moonlighting as taxi drivers and chauffeurs.

Full-time taxi drivers usually work one shift a day, which may last from 8 to 12 hours. Part-time drivers may work half a shift each day, or work a full shift once or twice a week. Drivers must be on duty at all times of the day and night, because most taxi companies offer services 24 hours a day. Early morning and late night shifts are common. Drivers work long hours during holidays, weekends, and other special events to support heavier demand for their services. Independent drivers, however, often set their own hours and schedules.

Design improvements in newer cabs have reduced stress and increased the comfort and efficiency of drivers. Many regulators require standard amenities such as air conditioning. Modern taxicabs are also sometimes equipped with sophisticated tracking devices, fare meters, and dispatching equipment. Satellites and tracking systems link many of these state-of-the-art vehicles with company headquarters. In a matter of seconds, dispatchers can deliver directions, traffic advisories, weather reports, and other important communications to drivers anywhere in the transporting area. The satellite link-up also allows dispatchers to track vehicle location, fuel consumption, and engine performance. Drivers can easily communicate with dispatchers to discuss delivery schedules and courses of action should there be mechanical problems. When threatened with crime or violence, drivers may have special "trouble lights" to alert authorities of emergencies and guarantee that help arrives quickly.

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs meet many different types of people. Dealing with rude customers and waiting for passengers requires

patience. Many municipalities and taxicab and chauffeur companies require taxi drivers to wear clean and neat clothes. Many chauffeurs wear more formal attire; such as a tuxedo, a coat and tie, a dress, or a uniform and cap.

Employment

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs held about 132,000 jobs in 1998. About two-thirds were wage and salary workers employed by a company or business. Of these, over one half worked for local and suburban passenger transportation and taxicab companies. Others worked for service oriented companies such as automotive rental dealerships, hotels, health care facilities, and funeral homes. About a third were self-employed.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Local governments set license standards and requirements for taxi drivers and chauffeurs. Although requirements vary, most municipalities have minimum qualifications for driving experience and training. Many taxi and limousine companies set higher standards than required by law. It is common for companies to review applicants' medical, credit, criminal, and driving records. In addition, many companies require a higher minimum age and prefer that drivers be high school graduates.

Persons interested in driving a limousine or taxicab must first have a regular automobile driver's license. They also must acquire a chauffeur or taxi driver's license, commonly called a "hack" license. Local authorities generally require applicants for a hack license to pass a written exam or complete a training program. To qualify through either an exam or a training program, applicants must know local geography, motor vehicle laws, safe driving practices, regulations governing taxicabs, and display some aptitude for customer service. Many training programs include a test on English proficiency, usually in the form of listening comprehension; applicants who do not pass the English exam must take an English course along with the formal driving program. Many taxicab or limousine companies sponsor applicants and give them a temporary permit that allows them to drive, although they may not yet have finished the training program or passed the test. However, some jurisdictions, such as New York City, have discontinued this practice and now require driver applicants to complete the licensing process before operating a taxi or limousine.

Some taxi and limousine companies give new drivers on-the-job training. They show drivers how to operate the taximeter and communications equipment, and how to complete paperwork. Other topics covered may include driver safety and popular sightseeing and entertainment destinations. Many companies have contracts with social service agencies and transportation services to transport elderly and disabled citizens in non-emergency situations. To support these services, new drivers may get special training on how to handle wheelchair lifts and other mechanical devices.

Taxi drivers and chauffeurs should be able to get along with many different types of people. They must be patient when waiting for passengers or when dealing with rude customers. It is also helpful for drivers to be tolerant and have even tempers when driving in heavy and congested traffic. Drivers should be dependable because passengers rely on them to be picked up at a prearranged time and taken to the correct destination. To be successful, drivers must be responsible and self-motivated because they work with little supervision. Increasingly, companies encourage drivers to develop their own loyal customer base to improve their businesses.

The majority of taxi drivers and chauffeurs are called "lease drivers." Lease drivers pay a daily, weekly, or monthly fee to the company allowing them to lease their vehicle. In the case of limousines, leasing also allows the driver access to the company's dispatch system. The fee may also include a charge for vehicle maintenance, insurance, and a deposit on the vehicle. Lease drivers may take their cars home with them when they are not on duty.

Opportunities for advancement are limited for taxi drivers and chauffeurs. Experienced drivers may obtain preferred routes or shifts. Some advance to dispatcher or manager jobs; others may start their own limousine company. On the other hand, many drivers like the independent, unsupervised work of driving their automobile.

In small and medium size communities, drivers are sometimes able to buy their taxi, limousine, or other type of automobile and go into business for themselves. These independent owner-drivers require an additional permit allowing them to operate their vehicle as a company. Some big cities limit the number of operating permits. In these cities, drivers become owner-drivers by buying permits from owner-drivers who leave the business. Although many owner-drivers are successful, some fail to cover expenses and eventually lose their permit and automobile. Good business sense and courses in accounting, business, and business arithmetic can help an owner-driver become successful. Knowledge of mechanics enables owner-drivers to perform routine maintenance and minor repairs to cut expenses.

Job Outlook

Persons seeking jobs as taxi drivers and chauffeurs should encounter good opportunities. Thousands of job openings will occur each year as drivers transfer to other occupations or leave the labor force. However, driving jobs vary greatly in terms of earnings, work hours, and working conditions. Opportunities should be best for persons with good driving records and the ability to work flexible schedules.

Employment of taxi drivers and chauffeurs is expected to grow as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2008 as local and suburban travel increases with population growth. Opportunities should be best in rapidly growing metropolitan areas.

Job opportunities can fluctuate from season to season and from month to month. Extra drivers may be hired during holiday seasons and peak travel and tourist times. During economic slowdowns, drivers are seldom laid off but they may have to increase their working hours, and earnings may decline somewhat.

Earnings

Earnings of taxi drivers and chauffeurs vary greatly, depending on the number of hours worked, customers' tips, and other factors. Median hourly earnings of taxi drivers and chauffeurs, excluding tips, were $7.48 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between $6.02 and $9.79 an hour. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $5.55 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $12.44 an hour. Median hourly earnings in the industries employing the largest number of taxi drivers and chauffeurs in 1997 were as follows:

Local and suburban transportation	$8.30
Taxicabs	7.10
Automotive rentals, no drivers	6.40

According to limited information available, the majority of self-employed taxi owner-drivers earned from about $20,000 to $30,000 annually, including tips. However, professional drivers with a regular clientele often earn more. Many chauffeurs who worked full time earned from about $25,000 to $50,000, including tips. Earnings were generally higher in urban areas.

Related Occupations

Other workers who have similar jobs include personal attendants, tour and travel guides, busdrivers, truckdrivers, and subway and streetcar operators.

Sources of Additional Information

Information on licensing and registration of taxi drivers and chauffeurs is available from offices of local governments regulating taxicabs. For information about work opportunities as a taxi driver or chauffeur, contact local taxi or limousine companies or State employment service offices.

For general information about the work of taxi drivers and the taxi industry, contact:

☛ International Taxicab and Livery Association, 3849 Farragut Ave., Kensington, MD 20895. Internet: **http://www.taxinetwork.com**

For general information about the work of limousine drivers, contact:

☛ National Limousine Association, 900 North Pitt St., Suite 220, Alexandria, VA 22314. Telephone (toll free): 1-800-652-7007.

Truckdrivers

(O*NET 97102A, 97102B, 97105, and 97117)

Significant Points

- Opportunities in truckdriving should be good because this occupation has among the greatest number of job openings each year.
- Competition is expected for jobs offering the highest earnings or most favorable work schedules.
- A commercial drivers' license is required to operate most larger trucks.

Nature of the Work

Truckdrivers are a constant presence on the Nation's highways and interstates, delivering everything from automobiles to canned foods. Due to their ability to link up with ships, trains, and airplanes, trucks usually make the initial pickup and final delivery of goods. Trucks carry nearly all goods at some point in their journey from producer to consumer.

Before leaving the terminal or warehouse, truckdrivers check their trucks for fuel and oil. They also inspect the trucks to make sure the brakes, windshield wipers, and lights are working and that a fire extinguisher, flares, and other safety equipment are aboard and in working order. Drivers make sure their cargo is secure and adjust their mirrors so that both sides of the truck are visible from the driver's seat. Equipment that does not work, is missing, or not loaded properly is reported to the dispatcher.

Once underway, drivers must be alert to prevent accidents. Because drivers of large tractor-trailers sit higher than cars, pickups, and vans, they can see farther down the road. They seek traffic lanes that allow them to move at a steady speed, while keeping sight of varying road conditions.

The length of deliveries varies according to the merchandise being transported and the final destination of the goods. Local drivers may provide daily service for a specific route, while other drivers make inter-city and interstate deliveries that take longer and may vary from job to job. The driver's responsibilities and assignments change according to the time spent on the road and the type of payloads transported.

Short haul or *local truckdrivers* may be assigned short "turnarounds" to deliver a shipment to a nearby city, pick up another loaded trailer, and drive it back to their home base the same day. They usually load or unload the merchandise at the customer's place of business. Drivers may have helpers if there are many deliveries to make during the day or if the load requires heavy moving. Typically, before the driver arrives for work, material handlers load the trucks and arrange items in order of delivery to minimize handling of the merchandise. Customers must sign receipts for goods and pay drivers the balance due on the merchandise if there is a cash-on-delivery arrangement. At the end of the day, drivers turn in receipts, money, records of deliveries made, and any reports on mechanical problems with their trucks.

The work of local truckdrivers varies depending on the product they transport. Produce truckers usually pick up a loaded truck early in the morning and spend the rest of the day delivering produce to many different grocery stores. Lumber truckdrivers, on the other hand, make several trips from the lumber yard to one or more construction sites. Gasoline tank truckdrivers attach the hoses and operate the pumps on their trucks to transfer the gasoline to gas stations' storage tanks.

Some local truckdrivers have sales and customer relations responsibilities. The primary responsibility of *driver-sales workers*, or *route drivers*, is to deliver their firm's products and represent the company in a positive manner. Their response to customer complaints and requests for special services can make the difference between a large order and a lost customer. Route drivers also use their selling ability to increase sales and gain additional customers.

The duties of driver-sales workers vary according to their industry, the policies of their particular company, and the emphasis placed on their sales responsibility. Most have wholesale routes that deliver to businesses and stores rather than homes. For example, wholesale bakery driver-sales workers deliver and arrange bread, cakes, rolls, and other baked goods on display racks in grocery stores. They estimate the amount and variety of baked goods to stock by paying close attention to the items that sell well, and those sitting on the shelves. They may recommend changes in a store's order or may encourage the manager to stock new bakery products. Driver-sales workers employed by laundries that rent linens, towels, work clothes, and other items visit businesses regularly to replace soiled laundry. From time to time, they solicit new orders from businesses along their route.

Vending machine driver-sales workers service machines in factories, schools, and other buildings. They check items remaining in the machines, replace stock, and remove money deposited in the cash boxes. They also examine each vending machine to make minor repairs, clean machines, and to see merchandise and change are dispensed properly.

After completing their route, driver-sales workers order items for the next delivery based on what products have been selling well, the weather, time of year, and any customer feedback.

Long haul truckdrivers may haul loads from city to city for a week or more before returning home. Some companies use two drivers on very long runs—one drives while the other sleeps in a berth behind the cab. "Sleeper" runs may last for days, or even weeks, usually with the truck stopping only for fuel, food, loading, and unloading.

Some long-distance drivers who have regular runs transport freight to the same city on a regular basis. Other drivers perform unscheduled runs because shippers request varying service to different cities every day. Dispatchers tell these drivers when to report for work and where to haul the freight.

Truckdrivers make sure cargo is secure before departing for their destination.